2: Hudson E-4, 5 (1936) 1938 RQ2 Kazak RQ2



695 [692] Kazak common law[33] describe it after it had been considerably codified and systematized by Russian administrators.[34] A system of "people's courts," presided over by three judges elected subject to government approval was instigated, trial procedure formalized, and appellate courts established. According to my informants, whose ideas though somewhat vague agreed on the main point, the court of the bij had formerly been rather loosely organized. As mentioned above there was no fixed succession to the office of bij; a particular case might be referred to any outstanding individual who would render a decision according to his lights or interests.

Trial procedure consisted of hearing the evidence under oath of direct witnesses, if any, to the acts under consideration and of specially selected "character witnesses," relatives of the two parties. The "character witnesses" were not directly concerned in the case under consideration but were chosen from among the more distant relatives of the litigants and had to be acceptable to the opposing side.[35] The judge for his efforts in the [693] case was rewarded with presents from both parties if the affair could be settled to their mutual satisfaction,[36] but according to my informants he would frequently weigh his decision in favor of the individual from whom the largest present might be expected.

Concerning the cultural attitudes toward various offenses and specific methods of punishment or amounts of compensation there is great discrepancy and contradiction not only between the accounts of different writers but frequently within the pages of one report. The details of indemnification in particular cases are not of immediate concern but the question of the ultimate source of compulsion for enforcing them is of importance.

696 The bij's court had no direct executive or police powers. My informants were unable to say what would happen if a man refused to pay a judgment rendered against himself. Kargabaiev said, "It would never happen." I was not able to continue this line of inquiry but, although public opinion was clearly the final and only real source of coercion, yet it appears, as mentioned in connection with baranta, that the creditor might be permitted and perhaps expected to take matters into his own hands by attempting to collect the obligation by force. Grodekov[37] also gives indication that it might be possible for an individual incorrigibly lacking in social cooperation to be expelled from his uru.

689 626 Expulsion was also apparently the punishment for grave offenses against society as a whole, as for example serious breaches of the exogamic rule for which it was impossible to atone by compensation. Such cases, according to the informants, were very rare but used occasionally to happen when a man and girl who were close relatives fell in love with one another. It would be necessary for them to "go to another aul, or to the mountains, or to the city."

[33] See: Izraitsov, *Obychnoe Pravo*; Ibragimov, *Zametki o Kirgizskom Sude*; Samokvasov, *Sbornik Obychnago Prava*, 200–43; Kozlow, *Das Gewohnheits Recht*; Petri, *Über die Rechtsbegriffe*; Grodekov, *Kirgizy i Karakirgizy*; Dingelstedt, *Le Droit coutumier*.

[34] The most complete account in English of the old Kazak customary law, largely translated from the Russian edition of Levshin, has been recently published by Riasanovskii (*Customary Law of the Kirghiz*).

[35] Dingelstedt, *Le Droit coutumier*, 323–26; Levshin, *Description des hordes*, 400.

[36] Dingelstedt, *op. cit.*, 220.

[37] *Kirgizy i Karakirgizy*, 246–48.

602 The wife who leaves her husband in a disagreement should not take anything with her. This would be robbery.

685 Robbery is permissible between relatives more distant than the third degree, with the obligation of return in so far as possible in the following cases: a) for the payment of kalym. because the increase of descendants is /161/ a laudable affair; b) for the payment of a debt; c) in time of famine; d) for a necessary trip and for the pursuit of thieves. (1)

[626] 1. Sometimes when something is missing in a village they put a bakan (pole to raise the changarak/the hoop in the center of the tent top/ when putting up the tent) up in the middle of the village and ask the thief to place the missing object under the bakan, threatening otherwise to invite the mullah in to discover him. The mullahs have various devices for discovering a thief. They bake a flat cake, blow on it (dem salady), and give everyone a piece, and when the thief swallows his piece, he will choke on it. They put a bladder (kuuk) in the hand of everyone, in turn, and in the thief's hand it swells (kebedi). They blow on a metal pitcher, calling the names of everyone in turn. When the name of the thief is called, the pitcher begins to turn around.

685 Furthermore these same biis permit taking away a horse from a known thief who is setting out to steal, if there is proof of this. They add however, that ayb is paid if the horse is taken away without proof, even though it be from a man banished from the community for stealing or one deprived of good name (muttakham). Taking away game caught by an eagle is not robbery but is taking the "chiralga" gift by force; therefore they require it to be returned without ayb. If the taking of the game were done secretly, then it would be stealing, and ayb would be paid. Finally, it is permissible to steal in return for stealing, i. e., baranta.

E. A. Aleksandrov reports from the words of the honorable Kazakhs, Umbet Galiev and Nurman Sarchinov, of the Kazalinsk uyezd, that stealing from the son and from the father is not permitted. In general such an act results in punishment for the younger persons, and ayb or shaming before the village for the older.

674 Horse stealing is more predominant than stealing of other livestock because horses are easier to arouse (chapchan). It takes

may even place the authority in the hands of an adult son, if he has one, or a brother. Recourse to such action may be taken only rarely, but it is nevertheless a recognized delimitation of paternal powers. The parental authority over the son serves as the model for all authority patterns in Kazakh society, such as those involving the village elder, the clan leader, the beg, and the khan.[1]

In the past the parental authority was limited in another sense; the family was part of a village which camped and pastured its herds in common. The leaders of the village decided when and where to camp, when to change camp, when to break up the winter concentration of herds and families and move to the more dispersed spring and summer pastures.[2] A family head disobeyed these decisions at his risk. It was to his interest to follow them, since he gained many things thereby: fellowship, social position, protection from dangers by weight of numbers, assistance in time of need. The village in turn was subordinate to the clan authority if there was one. In case of raids, feuds, or other breaches of the peace, a village leader would appeal to the clan chief for aid. In a dispute between villages, a village elder would appeal to his clan chief for a judgment in his favor.

The village elder was the judge of his community, and decided all cases, usually with the support of the other senior men of the village. Appeals from their decisions were rare, defiance of their decisions even rarer. Behind the judgment of the village leader and the other elders lay the force of social solidarity, the weight of the entire village; defiance meant ejection and flight. Defiance of father by the son had similar consequences. The ultimate authority rested with the khan, if there was one, and if he cared to use his power, for he backed his authority with an army and the right of punishment by death or imprisonment, in addition to the force of his position.

The Kazakh household could include several wives if the position and wealth of the master allowed it. In one community studied, the Adai lineage on Mangyshlak peninsula, half the men had only one wife and half had two. In general, very few families contained more than two wives, although there is in theory no upper limit on the number of wives (exclusive of concubines) that a man can have. The ideal number of wives in princely families was considered to be five or nine—in contrast to the ideal number of wives for Moslems which the Koran gives as four. The family and marriage patterns of the Kazakhs are among the traits which give a pronouncedly non-Islamic coloring to their society.[3]

A youth was given his own tent and appurtenances when he came of age; traditionally he was soon to be married, and in fact a substantial number were married by the time they were 20 years old. Even as late as 1926, 222 out of every 1,000 males were married by that age, and in former years the rate was higher. The tent was not identical with the household unit. A young married couple with children did not

[1] Izmaylov, 1897, pp. 5, 11.
[2] Radloff (104), 1893, p. 513; Rudenko *et al*, 1930, pp. 4-8.
[3] Kuratu (73), 1910, p. 42.